## NATIONAL INTELLIGENCER.

THE LAST DAYS AT MOUNT VERNON.

From the Custis Recollections and Private Memoirs of the Life and Character of Washington.

The year 1709 was in its last month; WASH-INGTON had nearly completed his sixty-eighth year; the century was fast drawing to a close, and with it this great man's life. Yet the "winter" of his age had shed its snows "so kindly" upon him as to mellow without impairing his faculties, both physical and mental, and to give fair promise of additional length of

Nor was Washington unmindful of the sure progress of time, and of his liability to be called at any moment to "that bourne from which no traveller returns." He had for years kept a will by him, and after mature reflection had so disposed of his large property as to be satisfactory to himself and to the many who were so fortunate and happy as to share in his testamentary remembrance.

The last days, like those that preceded them in the course of a long and a well-spent life, were devoted to constant and useful employment. After the active exercise of the morning in attention to agriculture and rural affairs, in the evening came the post bag, loaded with letters, papers, and pamphlets. His correspondence both at home and abroad was immense; yet was it promptly and fully replied to. No letter was unanswered. One of the best bred men of his time, Washington deemed it a grave offence against the rules of good manners and propriety to leave letters unanswered. He wrote with great facility, and it would be a difficult matter to find another, who had written so much, who has written so well. His epistolary writings will descend to posterity as models of good taste, as well as developing superior powers of mind. General HENRY LEE once observed to the chief, "We are a mazed, sir, at the vast amount of work that you accomplish." Washington replied, "Sir, I rise at four o'clock, and a great deal of my work is done while others are asleep.

Se punctual a man delighted in always having about him a good timekeeper. In Philadelphia the first President regularly walked up to his watchmaker's (Clarke, in Second street) to compare his watch with the regulator. At Mount Vernon the active yet always punctual farmer invariably consulted the dial when returning from his morning ride and before entering his house.

The affairs of the household took order from the master's accurate and methodical arrangement of time. Even the fisherman on the river watched for the cook's signal when to pull in shore, so as to deliver his scaly products in time for dinner.

The establishment of Mount Vernon employed a perfect army of servants; yet to each one was assigned certain special duties, and these were required to be strictly performed. Upon the extensive estate there was rigid discipline, without severity. There could be no confusion where all was order; and the affairs of this vast concern, embracing thousands of acres and hundreds of dependants, were conducted with as much ease, method, and regularity as the affairs of an ordinary homestead.

Mrs. Washington, an accomplished Virginia housewife of the olden time, gave her constant attention to all matters of her domestic household, and by her skill and superior management greatly contributed to the comfortable reception and entertainment of the crowds of guests always to be found in the hospitable mansion of Mount

Invariably neat and clean in his person, with clothes of the old-fashloned cut, but made of the best materials, WASHINGTON required less waiting upon than any man of his age and condition in the world. A single body servant attended in his room to brush his clothes, comb and tie his hair, (become very thin in his last days, worn in the old-fashioned queue, and rarely with powder,) and to arrange the materials of his toilet. This toilet he made himself, in the simplest and most expeditious manner, giving my mind. the least possible amount of his precious time to any thing relative to his person. When rising at four o'clock he lighted his own candles, made up his fire, and went diligently to work, without disturbing the slumbers of his

horses of the Narragansett breed, celebrated as saddle gaited under the saddle, but were scary, and therefore unfitted for the service of one who liked to ride quietly on his farm, occasionally dismounting and walking in his fields to inspect his improvements. From one of these only fall he ever had from a horse in his life. It was in November, late in the evening. The General, accompanied by Major Lewis, Mr. Peake, (a gentleman residing in the neighborhood,) the Author of the Recollections, and a groom, were returning from Alexandria to Mount Vernon. Having halted for a few moments, the General dismounted, and upon rising in his stirrup again the Narragansett, alarmed at the glare from a fire near the road-side, sprang from under his rider, who came heavily to the ground. Our-saddles were empty in an instant, and we rushed up to give our assistance, fearing he was hurt; it was unnecessary. The vigorous old man was upon his feet again, brushing the dust from his clothes; and, after thanking us for our prompt assistance, observed that he was not hurt, that he had had a very complete tumble, and that it was owing to a cause that no horseman could well avoid or control; that he was only poised in his stirrup, and had not yet gained his saddle when the scary animal sprang from under him. Meantime all of our horses had gone off at full speed. It was night, and over four miles were to be won ere we could reach our destination. The Chief observed that, as our horses had disappeared, it only remained for us to take it on foot, and with manly strides led the way. We had proceeded but a short distance on our march, as dismounted cavaliers, when our horses have in sight. Happily for us some of the servants of Mr. Peake, whose plantation was hard by, in returning home from their labor, encountered our flying steeds, captured them, and brought them to us. We were speedily remounted, and goon the lights at Mount Vernon were seen glimmering in the distance.

Upon Washington's first retirement in 1783 he became convinced of the defective nature of the working animals in the oriculture of the Southern States, and set about remedying the evil by the introduction of mules instead of horses, the mule being found to live longer, be less liable to diseases, require less food, and in every respect to be more serviceable and economical than the horse in the agricultural labor of the Southern States. Up to 1783 scarcely any mules were to be found in the American Confederation; a few had been imported from the West Indies, but they were of diminutive size and of little value. So soon as the views on this subject of the illustrious farmer of Mount Vernon were known abroad, he received a present from the King of Spain of a jack and two jennies, selected from the royal stud at Madrid. The jack, called the Royal Gift, was sixteen hands high, of a grey color, heavily made, and of a sluggish disposition. At the same time the Marquis de Lafayette sent out a jack and jennies from the Island of Malta; this jack, called the Knight of Malta, was a superb animal, black color, with the form of a stag and the ferocity of a tiger. Washington availed himself of the best qualities of the two jacks by crossing the breeds, and hence obtained a favorite jack, called Compound, which animal united the size and strength of the Gift with the high courage and who receive \$2.50 to \$3.35, are next. This shows that activity of the Knight. The jacks arrived at Mount Vernon, if we mistake not, early in 1788. The General bred some very superior mules from his coach mares, sending them from Philadelphia for the purpose. In a few years the estate of Mount Vernon became stocked with mules of a superior order, rising to the height of sixteen hands, and of great power and usefulness, one wagon team of four mules selling at the sale of the General's effects for

In no portion of Washington's various labors and improvements in agriculture was he so particularly entitled of mules in farming labor, those animals being at this to come.

time almost exclusively used for farming purposes in the Southern States.

The General of the Armies of the United States was nuch aided in the discharge of the duties of commanderin-chief by Col. Lear, his military secretary. After the organization of his last army in 1798 the general-in-chief entrusted the details of the service more especially to the known ability and long-tried experience of Major Generals Hamilton and Pinckney: still reports were made to and orders issued from headquarters, Mount Vernon. The last army of the Chief was composed of military materials of the very first order. All of the general officers, and nearly all the field, were composed of revolutionary, ncluding the illustrious names of Hamilton, Pinckney, and William Washington; while in the provisional or army of reserve were Howard, Harry Lee, and others, the history of whose martial renown was to be found on the brightest pages of our revolutionary annals; so that, had the threatned invasion occurred, we may venture to say that the elite of Europe would have encountered in America an army every way worthy of their swords, and prepared to upheld and perpetuate the heroic fame of America's old

It pleased Providence to permit the beloved Washington to live to witness the fruition of his mighty labors in the cause of his country and mankind, while his success in the calm and honored pursuits of agriculture and rural affairs was grateful to his heart, and shed the most benign and happy influences upon the last days at Mount

## . The Revolutionary Letter.

CAMP NEAR WHITE PLAINS, 1778. DEAR CUSTIS: I thank you for your cordial and affectionate congratulations upon our late success at Monmouth, and the arrival of the French fleet at the Hook. The first. I think, might have been a glorious day if matters had begun well in the morning; but as the court martial, which has been sitting upwards of a month for the trial of Gen. Lee, is not yet over, I do not choose to say any thing on the subject further than that there evidently ppeared a capital blunder or something else somewhere. The truth, it is to be hoped, will come out after so long an vestigation of it.

If it had not been for the long passage of the French flect, which prevented their arrival till after the evacuation of Philadelphia, or the shallowness of the water at the entrance of the harbor of New York, which prevented their getting in there, one of the greatest strokes might have been aimed that ever was, and if successful, which I think would have been reduced to a moral certainty the ruin of Great Britain must have followed, as both army and fleet must undoubtedly have failen.

Count d'Estain, with his squadron, are now at Rhode Island, to which place I have detached troops, and hope soon to hear of some favorable adventure there, as an at-

empt will be made upon the enemy at that place.

After the battle of Monmouth I marched for this place where I have been encamped more than a fortnight cut off by the present position of the army all land sup-plies to the city of New York. I had the best reasons to elieve that the troops there were suffering greatly for want of provisions, but the French fleet leaving the Hook pens a door to the sea, through which no doubt they will endeavor to avil themselves. Give my love to Nelly, Col. Bassett and friends, and be

assured I am, with sincere regard and affection, yours, G°. WASHINGTON. To John Parke Custis, Esq. New Kent county, Virginia.

The Paternal Letter.

PHILADELPHIA, JANUARY 11, 1797. DEAR WASHINGTON: I hasten to acknowledge the recipt of your letter of the 7th instant, but which did not get to my hand till yesterday, and to express to you the sincere pleasure I feel in finding that I had interpreted

me parts of your letters erroneously. As you have the best and most unequivocal evidence the case is susceptible of that I have no other object in view by extending my cares and advice to you than what will redound to your future respectability, honor, and future happiness in life, so be assured that while you give me reason to expect a ready submission to my counls, and while I hear that you are diligent in pursuing the means that are to acquire these advantages, it wil afford me infinite gratification.

Your last letter, replete with assurances of this nature, place entire confidence in; they have removed all the oubts expressed in my last letter to you, and, let me repeat it again, have conveyed very pleasing sensations to

It was not my wish to check your correspondencesvery far from it; for with proper characters-and none surely can be more desirable than Dr. Stuart and Mr. Lear-and on proper subjects, it will give you a habit of expressing your ideas upon all occasions with facility and

In the last days at Mount Vernon, desirous of riding with hearing from you once a week than that these corpleasantly, the General procured from the North two respondences were not to be considered as an injunction or an imposition, thereby interfering with your studies horses. They were well to look at, and were pleasantly or concerns of a more important nature. So far am I from discountenancing writing of any kind, except on the hear, and you yourself might derive advantages from a short diary recorded in a book of the occurrences which happen to you, or within your sphere. Trifling as this horses the General sustained a heavy fall, probably the may appear at first view, it may become an introduction more interesting matters. At any rate, by carefully preserving these, it would give you more satisfaction in retrospective view than what you may conceive at

Another thing I would recommend to you-not that I want to know how you spend your money-and that is, to keep an account book and enter therein every farthing of your receipts and expenditures, the doing of which will initiate you into a habit from which considerable advantages would result. Where no account of this sort is kept there can be no investigation, no correction of errors, discovery, from a recurrence thereto, where too much too little has been appropriated to particular uses. From an early attention to these matters important and lasting benefits may follow.

and all unite in best wishes for you, and with sincere affection, I am always yours, G°. WASHINGTON.

VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE.

## Mr. G. WASHINGTON P. CUSTIS.

Both Houses of the Legislature of VIRGINIA have found it necessary to rescind a resolution heretofore passed providing for a final adjournment on the 25th instant, the condition of the business before them not allowing of an adjournment at so early a day.

The following amongst other bills were passed by the Senate towards the close of last week :

To incorporate the Western Port and Alexandria Rail-To incorporate the Warren and Hampshire Coal Mine

Railroad Company.

To incorporate the Alexandria Flour Mill Company.

orporate the Southwestern Virginia Mining and Manufacturing Company.

To authorize the Board of Public Works to make an additional subscription to the Weston and Fairmont Turn-

pike Company. To incorporate the Carbonwell Cannel Coal Company, To incorporate the Mount Carbon Mining Company. To incorporate the Old Dominion Manufacturing Com-

To amend the charter of the Upperville and Manassas ap Plank Road Company. The House of Dalegates passed-

Plank Road Company, with a three-fifths subscription of fifty thousand dollars. bill to incorporate the Fredericksburg and Gordonsrille Railroad, with a three-fifths subscription of four ndred and sixty thousand dollars.

A bill amending an act to incorporate the Lunenburg

A bill to increase the capital stock of the Rockinghan Curnpike Company fifty thousand dollars, and to provide or a three-fifths subscription of such increase. A bill authorizing a loan of \$640,000 by the State to

the James River and Kanawha Company to continue the Canal to some point at or near Covington or Clifton Forge, in Alleghany county, and to complete the tide-water

AUSTRALIA.-The New York Express publishes a list of the wages paid to workmen at Sidney, Australia, at the latest dates. The prices range for mechanics from \$2.50 to \$1.50 per day; brickmakers command the highest remuneration, \$4.50 to \$5 per day; and draymen, an erroneous impression has prevailed in raising the rates of Australian compensation to the California rule. The wages paid to the several trades are indeed, on an average, not much in advance of those that are now paid in our own cities. The prices of provisions there are not, however, near so high as in California. In one respect, the Express remarks, Australia will have the advantage of California. It is one of the finest agricultural countries in the world, and when it has the requisite population to develop its resources will be able to feed itself. Meanwhile it is drawing largely on England and the United to be hailed as a public benefactor as in the introduction States, and will probably continue to do so for some years

SPEECH OF MR. ANDREW JOHNSON, OF TENNESSEE,

On the " Act amendatory of existing laws relative to the half-dollar, the quarter-dollar, the dime, and the half-dime."

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, FEBRUARY 2, 1853. Mr. JOHNSON said : Mr. Speaker, the bill now under consideration is one which, according to my understand-ing of it, I am decidedly opposed to. It is not my pur-pose to apply epithets to it, or to make use of language with regard to it which would not be exactly suitable to the discussion of the subjects here. But I look upon it as the merest quackery—as the veriest charlatanism—so far as the currency of the country is concerned. The idea of Congress fixing the value of currency is an absurdity, notwithstanding the language of the Constitution—not the meaning of it. The Constitution of the United States demeaning of the clares that Congress shall have power "to coin money, regulate the value thereof, and of foreign coin, and fix the andard of weights and measures." What was the object of putting that provision in the

Sir, when the Constitution was framed each one of the Colonies had the power to coin its own money, and there would, consequently, have been coins of a different kind. The power was, therefore, conferred upon the General Government to coin money. And for what purpose? For the express purpose of making the coins uniform. The was to furnish coins which should be unexpress purpose was to furnish coins which should be un-derstood in all the States to contain so much metal. The great object was to have a uniform currency—a coin that was uniform in its value. Well, what is it proposed to do now? What is to be the uniform value of the coin? It is not the mere fact of Congress coining a piece of money, and stamping "five dollars" upon it, that fixes the value. But they can stamp it, and, in fixing that stamp, say to the country, and to the commercial world, that it contains

so much standard silver or standard gold—the standard being agreed upon and fixed before the coin is made—and that is all that it can do.

If we go back to the year 1834 we find that the standard of gold at that period was nine hundred pars pure gold, whilst the other one hundred parts were half silver and half copper. Those put together made what was called standard gold. Prior to the year 1834 our five called standard gold. Prior to the year 1834 our five dollar pieces contained of this standard gold two hun-dred and seventy grains. Well, what did that say to the trading community, to the commercial world? It said, "Here is a piece of metal bearing the impress of the Gov-ernment upon it, purporting to be five dollars, but con-taining two hundred and seventy grains of standard gold." The community understood its value. Congress did not fix the value. Congress merely stamped upon it how much gold it actually contained. Its galue was a con-ventional thing to be agreed upon by the parties. This remained the standard of gold up to 1834; but in that year we took it into our heads that we would legislate upon currency, and fix the value of it; and what did we lo? We passed a hiw changing the number of grains in piece from two hundred and seventy to two hundred and fifty-eight-making it twelve grains less. idea was, that by reducing the number of grains in a five lollar piece you made it worth less than the British coins that you occasionally had in the country. What has been the effect? Why, when you go into the market with American gold pieces containing two hundred and fifty-eight grains instead of two hundred and seventy, they charge you nine per cent. premium-which is the difference between it and the British sovereign, and then it goes for just what it did before. Notwithstanding the nominal change, the value has not

ship it or get bills of exchange. Well, what do you gain Why, it has led one step towards violating the very object intended by the Government! The goll coined prior to 1834 is sold for a premium. Look at the exhanges and prices-current, and you will find that it is uniform-so that each piece should represent a certain amount of gold or silver, and pass throughout the country and in the commercial world for what it was intended

now stands, our standard silver is nine hundred par's pure | which drives the silver out of circulation silver and one hundred parts copper. The dollar piece standard silver. The community and the commercial world understand what the American dollar contains, and passes for just what it does contain.

Now, what is the proposition brought forward in this 11? Why, it is to reduce this dollar of four hundred per cent. and a fraction. That is what you propose to do. grains of standard silver, and here is another contain the object? what is to be gained by it? You propose to make a half dollar coin, containing fourteen grains less han that now in use, a tender to be received in payment duties into the Treasury of the United States. Do you not see how we are depreciating the value of the currency of the country? You will then have two descriptions of gold coin, and you will have three descriptions of silver; for you propose also to change the composition three cent pieces. You now have a coin with a certain proportion of alloy, and you propose to change the standard, and give it another proportion. Thus there will be one description of silver coin containing one-fourth copper; another containing so many grains of standard silver, and still another containing a different number of grains of standard silver. Is it not apparent that by this mode of legislation you defeat the very object contemplated by the Constitution-a uniform currency throughout the Union? Sir, I am opposed to this tinkering with the currency of the country—this charlatanism—without understanding the subject upon which we propose to le-

Mr. DUNHAM. If the gentleman will permit me, I pro ose to change the standard of the three cent pieces, for the purpose of bringing them back to the uniform standard of other silver coin. When it was originally proposed to coin these three-cent pieces for use, a bill was drawn up providing that they should be coined entirely out of the depreciated Spanish coin. This depreciated coin was only to be received at the Mint for the purpose of their manufacture. During the last session, however, when the bill changing the rates of postage came up, the Post Office Committee in the Senate, for the purpose of meeting the necessities which would arise from the passage of that bill, took out of a former bill a single section providing for the number of grains of silver in the threecent piece, and for the amount of alloy, without the re striction that it should be manufactured exclusively out of the Spanish coin, and put it into that post office bill, and it passed in that shape. This is another instance of changing the currency of the country without understanding the principle upon which the change is made. The onsequence was, that the object originally intended by uthorizing the coinage of these three-cent pieces was not

Now, we propose, or at least I propose, to bring this pecies of coin back to the uniform standard adopted for

the other silver coin. Mr. Jourson. What the gentleman has said does not change the position I assume. The principle I am contending for, and with which I set out, is, that this tinkering with and changing the coin of the country, by varying the size and quantity of silver in that coin, is a violation of the spirit, if not of the letter, of the Constitution. So far as Congress is concerned, it cannot affect the value of the coin in the country. Congress cannot regulate the value of the coin. It may place a stamp upon it, and that stamp may indicate that it contains a certain number of grains of gold or silver; but that is all the Government can do, and all that the Constitution designed it should do. The design of the Constitution was, that you should make a coin of uniform value; but you propose to disregard that, and make a currency of unequal values, and thus render its condition more intolerable than it was

when each of the several States of the Union manufactured a currency for itself. Mr. SKELTON. I desire to ask the gentleman from Tennessee a question. He says we are tinkering with the currency of the country. Now, he will bear in mind that there is a difficulty, a practical difficulty, under which the country is now laboring. In consequence of the increased amount of gold in circulation, its value has decreased; and in consequence of the increased difference between the relative value of gold and silver, the gold has nearly driven the silver out of circulation. The question, therefore, for us to determine is, how we can be supplied with

this silver currency for circulation? Now, there are two methods by which we can accom plish this object. One is to increase the value of the silver currency, and the other is to lessen the value of the gold currency. These are the remedies, one of which, I think, must be adopted. Now, I ask the gentleman from Tennessee what remedy he proposes for the difficulty under which the country is laboring?

will allow me to go on.

Mr. Skelton. I am not tenacious as to what remedy, so that we may have a remedy, to supply the commercial wants of the country with a currency. What means does the gentleman propose by which we may have a silver is the practical operation of monetary affairs even the gentleman has so much abhorrence to charlatanism, to do it. hope he will propose some remedy by which these diffiulties may be obviated.

only to ask a good many questions, but have given him some time making silver the exclusive currency. What time to answer them, which will save me the trouble of would be the effect? It would create a great demand for

answering them myself. But if the gentleman had allowed me to go on, I should have come to the points to which he alludes directly.

But to return to the point with which I set out. The bill before the House assumes that while your present dollar contains four hundred and twelve and a half grains of standard silver, you can, by law, make another con-taining only three hundred and eighty-six grains, worth just as much as the other. Now, if you will take the pains to subtract the amount of standard silver contained n one from that contained in the other, you will find that one contains about seven cents more than the other. If we can then by law reduce the present standard seven per cent, and make the value of the reduced standard equal to the other, I ask the House and the country if the philosopher's stone has not been discovered? If we can by law make one hundred and seven dollars out of one hundred dollars, we can, by the same process, make the problems that have come up for solution, from the time of the alchemists down to the present time, none can compare with that solved by this modern American Congress. They alone have discovered that they can make money; that they can make one hundred and seven dollars out of one hundred dollars. If they can increase dollars out of one hundred dollars. If they can increase it to that extent they can made money and increase it to infinite which arises from the mere expense of transit. it worth one hundred and fifty dollars. Why, sir, of all ty; and thus, by the operations of the mints, can the Government supply its own revenues. The great difficul-ty with mankind is solved; the idea that so much money is wanted all over the world is at length at an end. The problem is at last solved. This Congress, in the plenitude of its power, in its wisdom, can, whenever it chooses, by a single stroke of legislation, change the currency of he country into any amount desirable.

so much nutriment, indispensable to the existence of man. To-morrow he again goes into market, but cannot get more than half a bushel for his dollar. Now, where is the power to fix the value of that dollar? Do you not see that it is with the commercial world? Do you not see that the natural laws which regulate commerce determine the value? Do you not see that it is a thing to be agreed upon between parties and between nations dealing in the commodity we call money?

How will this plan work practically? Here is one currency in which a dollar contains four hundred and twelve so much nutriment, indispensable to the existence of man.

How will this plan work practically? Here is one currency in which a dollar contains four hundred and twelve grains of standard silver, and here is another in which the dollar contains twenty-eight grains of silver less. Do you not see that a man who has one of these coins of four hundred and twelve grains in his pocket is worth seven cents in his? It makes a decided difference. The commercial world will take these coins for what they are intrinsically worth and not few what the legal takes a second to substitute three-cent pieces containing exactly the proper quantity of alloy. Let your half dollar, quarter dollar, and the same arconticular of the same arconticu worth, and not for what the legal stamp represents then to be worth. Such will be the practical bearing of the whole system of coinage proposed. But I see the bill, if it is not altered by amer ent, provides that these new coins are to be received in payment of all debts below five value. What its worth will be, and what it will pass for, dollars. The Secretary of the Treasury proposes ten is a matter to be settled by the commercial world, and no

Mr. DUNHAM. The amendments which the Committee Ways and Means propose strike out that provision and insert a simple provision that these coins shall be received in payment of all dues of the United States. But the issue of this coin is left entirely under the control of the Secretary of the Treasury, so that if more should be issued than the necessities of the country require it would come back again into the Treasury, and the further issue would Mr. Johnson. Now see the effect of the gentleman's

been affected, for when it is brought into contact with argument. What is it? Here is one species of silver other coins, you must give that premium before you can | coin which is to be a tender in payment of debts, and here is another which is only receivable in payment of the public dues.

Mr. DUNHAM. I should like to ask the gentleman one question.

Mr. Johnson. I cannot afford to allow the gentleman The object of the Constitution was to have the coins to consume more of my time. This bill, if adopted at once by law, brings about two currencies, one worth more than the other. Why, the thing of which we complain more than any thing else, in connexion with the currency be. The law of 1834 defeats that object. As the law of the country, is the prevalence of a paper circulation this bill passes, and one man owes the Government a debt contains four hundred and twelve grains and a lalf of and another owes an individual a debt. The man who owes the Government will be obliged to pay seven per cent. less than the one who owes the individual. This is the worst sort of shinplaster legislation.

Now, let us turn to this provision of the constitution again. It says that "Congress shall have power to coin and twelve grains down to three hundred and eighty-six money and regulate the value thereof." All this relates grains. You propose to make a discount of about seven to what I have been speaking about. But what else shall Congress do? It shall fix the standard of weights and The result will be that you will make another kind of measures. I repeat, it shall regulate the value so far as coin and another kind of currency in the country. Here the coin is concerned, and shall fix the standard of weights one half dollar containing one hundred and ninety-two and measures. How fix the standard of weights and grains of standard silver, and here is another containing we hundred and six and a quarter grains. Well, what is the object? what is to be gained by it? You propose to or commodity which is to be measured? Not at all. What your standard bushel? We find that your standard alf-bushel contains 1,752 cubic inches. Well, sir, corn becomes a little scarce, or wheat becomes a little scarce, and we, by legislation, change the standard, and say that half a bushel shall contain 750 inches less than it did before. What is the effect? Will the man who wants to 1,000 square inches as he would for one containing 1,750? Certainly not. Yet this is precisely the position you assume in relation to the currency of the country. You assume to fix the price while you measure the quantity of silver to be placed in a coin.

And if you go into the market with one dollar containing four hundred and twelve and a half grains, and another with only three hundred and eighty-six grains, the dollar which has the most silver in it will sell for the most, and the dollar which has the least will sell for the

Now, let us see how this bill will operate. Sometimes we talk about retrospective laws. I am no lawyer, and do not assume to be; but I may refer to such pla opics without any extraordinary assumption of legal mowledge, for these things come within the range of all our observation and comprehension. Sometimes, I say we talk about retrospective laws, which impair the obliation of contracts. Now, let us see if this bill is liable to that objection. For instance, we make a contract now, with the standard of gold and silver fixed, involving an mount of say \$500, with the understanding that the liver dollar contains four hundred twelve and a half rains of standard silver. After the contract is made, aw is passed creating a currency worth seven per ceit.
less than the old one, and which shall be taken in payent of Government dues. What does the debtor do He provides himself with this currency, worth seven per cent. less than the currency in which he contracted his ent. less than the currency in which debt, and pays his debt with it, and in that operation pays his \$500 with \$465. Is not an act thus operating trospective in its character, and does it not impair the bligation of contracts? Is not that legislation retrospective which passes a law by which a man may be led to receive less, intrinsically, for his debt than he contracted to receive? He contracted to receive so much standard silver, and we propose to compel him to take even per cent, less. Such is the effect of this bill. You make the coin a tender in payment of debts. In what difficulty do you thus find yourself? You either depreciate your currency, and compel a man to take it for more than it is worth, or you leave it as it is. Take either horn of the dilemma, and there are one or two consequences which must follow. If you make this coin a tender in payment of debts, you impair the obligation of contracts and if you do not, you have one currency of a higher and one of a lower grade.

But there is an erroneous idea pervading the community as to the relative value of gold and silver, and that in consequence of the change in that relative value, by the great influx of gold, we must make a change in our coins. The old idea was, that this relative value was about sixteen to one-it varies a fraction from that, but I speak in und numbers-that is, that there is about sixteen times as much silver in existence as there is gold, and that herefore, a sixteenth part of a certain amount of gold will answer the same purposes in commerce as sixteen times that amount of silver. We all understand that what made that difference? Was it arbitrary law No, but the scarcity of gold. It was the result of commercial law-a natural law, which rises above legislative enactments, and which will always control these matters in defiance of legislation. Gentlemen tell us that while the standard of silver in

England remains what it is now, we can purchase a pound sterling of gold with about thirty-six cents less their standard than with ours. Suppose, then, you take the value of a pound of gold, in silver of the United States, and go to England and buy a pound sterling of gold there, and you have thirty-six cents left. when you bring your pound of gold to the United States will it not be measured by the standard of value here, established by the commercial community? questionably. You see the thing corrects and regulates itself. As soon as the trading community finds out that you are buying up silver, in order to purchase gold in Mr. Jounson. I will come to that, if the gentleman England, where it can be had for two per cent. less than here, what do the holders of silver do? You cannot get their silver unless you pay them two per cent. prem is the practical operation of monetary affairs every day currency in the country for the purposes of change? If Will you, then, attempt to fix it by law. It is impossible Let us take a case to illustrate. Suppose som hope he will propose some remedy by which these diffi-ulties may be obviated.

Mr. Johnson. I have given way to the gentleman not culation, and making it a contraband article, and at the

lar has four hundred and twelve it; and if it contains three hundred want it also, and will take it just all the sman and ordinary transact will be different in more extendations. That may be readily shows that this hill, as it comes from the der this bill, as it comes from the linto the market in the morning and instance, a debt of five dollars neighbors go to market and do neighbors go to market and do the same thing butcher receives it without objection, and given many pounds of beef for it as for any other odibutcher accumulates a few hundred dollars is but when he goes into the country to buy his seek pays out this currency in sums of two or three had dollars, he must pay the seven per count.

We are trying to make specie partake of the dollars of dayseigned. We are trying to make specie

We are trying to make specie partake of the derrector of depreciated paper. That is the tendency of this pro-

which arises from the mere expense of transit.

Congress has power to fix the standard of weights measures. And I remarked before, suppose Congtake a notion to change this relative value of silver gold, of one to sixteen. Our gold fields this year produce a certain amount; next year they will produce a weight of the quantity, and you say you must a law to regulate its value to silver, which has no rapidly increased. But any low was you are to be a silver. the country into any amount desirable.

Sir, I repeat again that this is all quackery. Let us see how this thing will work in practice. Here is a dollar. Do you talk about fixing the value of that? It is an absurdity. A man has a dollar to-day containing four hundred and twelve-and-a-half grains of silver. He goes into market and purchases a bushel of corn, containing so much nutriment, indispensable to the existence of man.

> lar, dime, and half dime bear the same proportion of al-loy, and then you will have a firm and stable currency, which the people understand, and which, in the commer-cial world, would be of a settled and uniform standard of legislation in the world can alter it.

The time alloted for the consideration of this subject here expired, and on the following day Mr. JOHNSON resumed his remarks as follows: When the morning hour expired yesterday, I was proceeding to discuss the bill now under consideration, which provides for the issuance of a new description of coin, differing from any that we have had heretofore.

The gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. Skelton) assumed that our present currency was defective, and that, as I was opposed to the proposition now before us, I was nd to furnish another remedy. Now, sir, I do not admit that proposition at all. If there is a defect in the currency, and if something is necessary to be done, that does not prove that the remedy proposed is the right one; and if it is not the right one, why, we might just as well let the currency remain as it is as to adopt something which seems to be a remedy, but which really will only increase the disease. The gentleman seems to think that I am bound to offer a remedy. Well, that is only another evidence of the quackery of the times. If a person goes into a room where there is a sick man, he may feel his pulse, may look at his tongue, and examine all the symptoms, and yet not understand the nature or character of the disease. But is he bound to administer a remedy without understanding the case, because the man is liseased? I hope, at all events, that I may be kept out of the hands of such doctors as that. It seems to me that in such a case the proper course would be for the physician to retire, and say, "I do not understand the case," and leave the patient just as he found him. Well, in this case, as I have got no remedy, I prefer to act the part of a prudent physician and to retire; as I do not understand

the case, I will not attempt to administer to the disease. But the gentleman says there is a disease, and that it results from the great increase in the commodity of gold. In that I think he is mistaken. I humbly conceive that the gentleman does not understand the proposition as it I assume here, and I defy successful refutation of it, that the quantity of gold may be increased upon that of silver without changing the relative commercial value of the metals. We in the United States have about one hundred and seventy-five millions of paper in circulation. Now, if Congress or the States had the power to drive that one hundred and seventy-five millions of paper from circulation and introduce one hundred and seventy-five drawal of the paper circulating medium, I say that, though you would increase the quantity of gold, the relative commercial value of gold. tive commercial value of gold and silver would be the same. Notwithstanding the relative quantities would be changed, the relative commercial value would stand as it did before. I defy contradiction of that proposition. The gentleman from New Jersey has imagined a disease when none exists. He is doctoring and giving his medi-cines to a man who is well. Now, if the man is well, I

think it is best to let him remain so, and not to commence administering to his case when he does not need medicine. So far as coin is concerned, the changing of our standard of gold or silver has no more effect upon the gold and silver coinage of the United States than a change in the standard of weights and measures would have upon the price of our cotton or wheat. Let us take the case of wheat as an illustration. A standard bushel of wheat now contains two thousand one hundred and fifty cubic We usually consider wheat good that weighs sixty-five pounds to the bushel. But, notwithstanding that that is our standard bushel, when you take wheat to Great Britain what do they do? Are they regulated by the measure here? No, sir; they give you so much for your wheat per quarter, requiring eight bushels to the quarter, and that it shall weigh seventy pounds a b Notwithstanding that you have established a standard of measure here, you are regulated by the market where you propose to send the article. Just so with your gold You may put four hundred and twelve grains in a silver dollar, and two hundred and fifty-eight grains in a gold five-dollar piece, or change it in any way you proper, but you will still be regulated by the standard where you undertake to sell the article or to circu-

But, sir, the great error into which the introducers and advocates of this bill have fallen is this: They say that there is a demand for specie abroad; that a premium is paid for it for the purpose of exportation, and that we must do something to keep specie in the country; and in attempting to imitate what Great Britain has done, so far as her silver currency is concerned, they have adopted precisely the opposite means. How does the matter stand n Great Britain, and why does this difference exist between an ounce of silver and an ounce of gold in Great Britain? It will be remembered that silver is not a currency there in the payment of debts over ten dollars, or forty shillings. Great Britain says that silver shall be a legal tender in the payment of debts under ten dollars, th to the Government and to individuals, and the Government is bound to redeem it in gold, which always keeps silver at par and in circulation. But what is the propo ere? Are gentlemen following the example Great Britain? No; they have taken the converse of the proposition, and undertake to do what Great Britain has by precisely opposite means. What do they propose todo? They propose, first, to change the standard of metal, to change the intrinsic value of the dollar, to change the dollar in quantity. And then what next does the bill propose? It proposes that silver shall be received in the payment of dues to the Government, but not in the payment of debts between individuals. How does that Why, do you not see that you thereby make ne portion of your specie a mere commercial article, while another portion of the specie in the community is a The legal tender now between individuals contains more

ilver than that which you propose to make a lawful tender for the dues of the Government. Now, you propose to depreciate this silver, and make a currency of it for the vernment, but not a tender in payment of debts. Does not every one see that if you depreciate this silver, no-body is bound to receive it, except the Government, in ayment of its dues?. And that if the Government colets its dues in this coin, the creditors of the Government will not be obliged to receive it as a lawful tender? Do not gentlemen see that in this manner the Government, by collecting its dues in the new currency and paying its ebts in the old, will be shaved to the amount of seven per cent.? That will be the practical operation of this bill.

Mr. Lawrence, in his letter to Mr. Webster of Februa

ry 19th, 1851, gives what he thinks is the best plan for regulating our currency; and as an expedient, I am inhas been suggested. It is his opinion that the Government will have to adopt it. His suggestion is: "If it should be thought wise to abolish the double stand-ard, (and upon this point I have little doubt,) I should sug-gest the coinage of silver tokens with ten or twelve per cent.

loy, which shall be made a legal tender for any sum not ex-

OREGON.

MESSAGE OF GOVERNOR GAINES .- The Oregonian of the 1st January contains the message of Gov. Gaines to the Legislature of Oregon. After alluding to other local matters, the Governor speaks of the products of the Territory, and says that the wheat and other small grains have become renowned not only for quality unsurpassed, but for average quantity, produced by moderate labor. It

may truly be made to excel all other agricultural regions. Among the staples for which Oregon is admirably adapted are wool, hemp, and flax : and no country in the world is better adapted for raising the former, as sheep do not require to be housed or fed at any time; flax and hemp grow spontaneously in many parts of the country. The Governor next alludes to the coal found at the Cowlitz. He says also that lead and minerals are found

in abundance. Of gold he thus speaks: "The gold mines near the southern boundary of the Territory are being wrought to a considerable profit, and gold in small quantities has been found on nearly all the tributaries of the Columbia heading in the eastern slope of the Cascade range of mountains. There is consider able analogy between the talcose and allied rocks of the Umpqua region and the gold-bearing rocks of California; and gold has been found on the South Umpqua, on the South Fork of the Santiam, east of the meridian line, on Calapooya creek, a tributary of the Willamette, and several other streams heading in the Cascade range of

FROM CALIFORNIA.

We learn from our correspondent at San Francisco that the Plains between Stockton and Fort Miller, at the head waters of the San Joaquin, are inundated. Rain had fallen for several weeks incessantly, rendering the roads impassable. An immense number of wagons from Stock-ton loaded with provisions for the inhabitants residing in San Joaquin and Tulare counties, are on the road, unable to advance or recede, while many of the inhabitants of those counties are represented to be in a famishing condition. Numerous families of emigrants had arrived through the Stockton Pass of the four creeks, Tulare county, but ewing to the state of the roads were unable to proceed further. Their situation, in some instances, is represented to be deplorable. Out of provisions, and una-ble to transport their wagons over the swollen streams, they were under the necessity of sending to Major Patten, the commander of Fort Miller, on the San Joaquin, some fifty miles off, for provisions to keep their women and children from perishing. The whole country is in a state of anxiety, and should the rains continue a serious suffering is apprehended. A whale boat had arrived at San Francisco from Fort Miller for provisions. It is the first boat that has ever passed down the San Joaquin from that remote station.—New York Express.

THE AIR-LINE SOUTHERN RAILROAD BILL, which has passed the New Jersey House, is strongly denounced by the Trenton American. This line, which is to have its termini on the Raritan and the Delaware, and is to avoid both Philadelphia and Baltimore, is a project got up in New York, with the ostensible view of Southern trade and travel. It crosses Delaware and the eastern counties of Maryland to Norfolk. The Legislature of Virginia, on Saturday, passed a resolution requesting the States of Maryland, Delaware, and New Jersey to grant the right of way to this road; but, as it has Baltimore and the lower sections of Maryland against it in one State and Wilmington in the other, it will probably receive but small favor from the Legislature of either. The project of running a road two or three hundred miles long away from all the great centres of business, going in th same direction, seems an odd movement. There is some other design probably behind the project which occasions the opposition in the New Jersey Legislature, where, we see by the proceedings of Wednesday, that the vote on the bill has been reconsidered in the House.-Ledger.

between the two trains of cars on the Jeffersonville and Madison roads. The two railroads are laid side and side for ten or twelve miles, from Columbus to Taylorsville; and the trains being very near together, the Madison train in the lead, the passengers threw out banters for a race. This was accepted by the Jeffersonville train, drawn by the fine locomotive Clarke, and away they went at real "railroad speed," when the Clarke passed Madison "under way," like a streak, to the great delight of the passengers on the train.—Louisville Courier.

The oldest man in New England died at Nottingham, New Hampshire, on the 23d of January last. His name was Charles Willey. He was born in Nottingham on the 25th day of March, 1746, and would consequently have. been one hundred and seven years of age next month. He was a soldier in the Revolutionary war, and has been a pensioner. He has been an active robust man, and until recently has been an active laborer. He says he learned to mow when ten years old, and used his scythe until he was a hundred, and then left, as he thought ninety years was long enough for any man to follow that business. He has left a son, Mr. Jonathan Willey, between seventy and eighty years of age, who is also a pensioner for services

HALIBUT FISHERY .- The Gloucester fishermen are again prosecuting the halibut fishery on George's Bank with renewed vigor. There are now some seventy-five sail of vessels in the fleet. Notwithstanding the great loss of life and property most every season experienced by our Gloucester friends in this business, they seem never to give up the ship; and we regret to learn that at this time fears are entertained for the safety of two vessels-the Franklin Pierce and Racer. These vessels left the port of Gloucester some three weeks ago, and have not been heard from. Both were new schooners, and together had about twenty men on Board.—Boston Traveller.

A despatch from Chicago, dated Thursday, states that on Wednesday night the United States hotel in that city took fire and was totally destroyed, with several adjoining buildings. Twelve horses perished in the flames. The loss is over \$25,000.

EXCITEMENT AT MOBILE. - Great excitement prevails in Mobile among real estate holders. Much of the valuable property in that city is derived from the title of a firm residing there many years ago—Messrs. Panton, Leslie & Co.—which is alleged to be defective. Two hundred ejectment suits have already been brought. Recent accounts represent that there is a fearful state of excitement among those interested. Property to a large amount

TERRIBLE ACCIDENT .- The Steam Saw Mill at Smith field, (N. C.) owned by W. S. Ballenger, Esq., was torn into atoms on Tuesday last, about 12 o'clock, by the explosion of the boiler of an engine. Mr. W. W. PERKINSON the sawyer, and WILLIS BALLENGER, a son of the owner of the mill, were immediately killed; two negro men were seriously hurt; and some children who were playing near were badly scalded. Parts of the boiler, one piece weighing about 400 pounds, were thrown upwards of sixty feet. The explosion was probably produced by a deficiency of water in the boiler.